(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to implement the interim recommendations of the Cauvery Commission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) to (c) A meeting of the Chief Ministers of the Cauvery basin States/ U.T. was convened on 30.09.1997 to understand the view points of all the basin States/U.T. for working out a scheme which is by and large generally acceptable to all States/ U.T. and which at the same time ensures implementation of the orders of the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal. The meeting was attended by the Irrigation/other concerned Ministers and senior officers fo the Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu States and Union Territory of Pondicherry.

The participants expressed their view points in the meeting. Whereas the States of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Union Territory of Pondicherry generally agreed to the draft scheme prepared by the central Government with some changes, the State of Karnataka strongly opposed the scheme and suggested constituting a co-ordination Committee instead.

The scheme is being finalised keeping in the view points of all the Basin States/Union Territory to the extent possible. After the scheme is notified it will be placed before both the Houses of the Parliament in accordance with Subsection (7) of Section 6A of the Inter State Water Disputes Act, 1956.

Misuse of Prepaid Cards In Cellphones Alarms Cops

*78. SHRI MRUTYUNJAYA NAYAK:

SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJBHI CHIKHALIA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item capitoned "Misuse of prepaid cards in cellphones alarms cops" appearing in the Hindustan Times, dated the October 17, 1997;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto;

(d) whether Government are also aware of the inherent dangers in the use of cellphone which is working as parallel wireless system threatening the internal and external securioty; and

(e) if so, the remedial measures Government contemplate to take to frustrate the misuse of cellphone, intercept such calls and apprehend such callers as they threaten the security?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government of Maharashtra has brought to the notice of the Govt. of India, the misuse of prepaid SIM cards by underworld gangs in Mumbai.

(c) The Government have taken up the matter with all the eight Cellular Mobile Telephone Service operators in the four metro cities including Mumbai, to strictly carry out verification of subscribers, identity. They have also been directed to maintain proper record of all subscribers to whom the service is provided by them.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. The Government is aware of the security implications of Cellular service. The licence for the operation of the Cellular Service is governed by the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885. Section 5 to the Act makes it obligatory for the cellular operators to provide necessary facilities for interception of messages passing through their networks.

[Translation]

Sinking of Indian Goods Vessel

*79. SHRI BHIMRAO VISHNUJI BADADE:

SHRI NAVEEN PATNAIK:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that an India goods vessel has sunk in the coastal belt of Malacca region;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) the number of crew rescued and crew members missing in that accident;

(d) the number of Indian crew members missing out of them;

(e) whether due compensation has been paid to the next Kith and Kin of the Indians who died due to the collision of the ship;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the steps taken by the Govenrment to avoid such accidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT SHRI T. G. VENKATARAMAN): (a) to (d) There was a collision between ICL Vikraman, an Indian registered shiip, belonging to India Cements Limited, Chennai and mv Mount-I of St Vincent flag on 26-9-97. As a result ICL Vikraman sank with the cargo. 29 of the 34 Indian crew members and officers including Master of ICL Vikraman are feared to have lost their lives. Remaining 5 crew members have been rescued and repatriated to India. An enquiry conducted by the Director General of Shipping, Mumbai has revealed that the mishap took place because of non-compliance of International Regulations for Prevention of Collision 1972, delayed manoeuvring, confusion due to use of VHF in restricted visibility and wrong manoeuver at close proximity.